

ESFA Update: 11 September 2019

[unable to retrieve full-text content] Latest information and actions from the Education and Skills Funding Agency for academies, schools, colleges, local authorities and further education providers.

£100m boost for cutting-edge Protector aircraft

The world-class Protector will be the first remotely controlled aircraft capable of attacking targets anywhere in world while being operated from their home base in RAF Waddington.

This contract will see General Atomics test the aircraft to its limit and report back on its performance in advance of the aircraft's introduction to the frontline in 2024.

Speaking at the DSEi conference today the Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Mike Wigston, said:

Protector exemplifies the benefits that military-industry partnering can bring. Through the embedding of experienced RAF operators in the programme, we are helping bring to life a world-leading capability which will provide the RAF with a remotely-piloted air system that can operate worldwide in unsegregated airspace.

Defence Minister Anne-Marie Trevelyan said:

Our intelligence-gathering and surveillance capabilities will be critical to staying ahead of our adversaries as we enter an era dominated by grey-zone warfare.

This contract represents a welcome step towards our world-beating Protector aircraft reaching the frontline, giving us the upper-hand against our adversaries.

Replacing the Reaper aircraft, Protector will be the world's first certified Remotely Piloted Air System (RPAS), meaning it can operate in civilian airspace. This is possible due to the aircraft's ground-breaking Detect and Avoid system which draws on enhanced sensors to avoid other aircraft.

Protector will be able to fly consistently for up to 40 hours, offering the RAF vastly improved armed Intelligence, Surveillance, Targeting and Reconnaissance (ISTAR) capability. The aircraft will be deployed across the full spectrum of operations, including ISTAR, search and rescue, flood prevention or disaster response missions.

Sir Simon Bollom, CEO of Defence Equipment and Support, said:

Our partnership with General Atomics is allowing us to explore cutting-edge technology to deliver capability to the RAF which is world class.

These trials with Protector show that we are determined to push the boundaries and ensure that our military personnel have the capability to respond robustly to a range of constantly evolving threats on the battlefield.

The aircraft will use enhanced data links and carry next-generation, low collateral, precision strike weapons, including the UK-made Brimstone missile (MBDA) and Paveway IV Laser Guided Bomb (Raytheon UK). The aircraft's design enables almost unlimited payload options in the future, depending on requirement.

The fleet will also have advanced anti-icing and lightning protection, providing the RAF with unprecedented flexibility to operate in adverse weather conditions.

Protector achieved a historic first last year after a demonstration aircraft flew non-stop from North Dakota to Gloucestershire in a flight that took over just over 20 hours.

The first Protector aircraft will be delivered to the RAF in October 2021. The aircraft will be based at RAF Waddington, which is set to benefit from the planned investment of £93 million to construct a new purpose-built hanger as well new facilities and accommodation for crews.

British Government signs agreements worth £31m to support development in Somaliland

The UK yesterday signed an agreement with the Government of Somaliland and the Netherlands to support the implementation of Phase II of the Somaliland Development Fund (SDF2) programme, which aims to improve the lives of local

people through the delivery of essential public services.

SDF2 (£25m, 2018-2022), will be delivered in partnership with the Somaliland government to promote long-term stability in the region. It will help improve the lives of the people of Somaliland by building critical infrastructure, such as roads, water systems and agricultural facilities, and will also help build capacity within Somaliland's institutions. The new programme which is aligned to Somaliland's National Development Plan II (NDPII) will build on the achievements of the original SDF (2013-2018) programme.

The UK and Somaliland also signed a renewed Memorandum of Understanding to support the implementation of the Energy Security and Resource Efficiency in Somaliland (ESRES) Programme that aims to provide a clean, affordable renewable energy boost in Somaliland.

The agreements were signed by President Bihi and Damon Bristow, the Head of Office for the UK's Department of International Development (DFID) in Somalia. Also present at the signing ceremony was the British Ambassador, Ben Fender, and the Head of the British Office in Hargeisa, Stuart Brown.

Speaking after the signing ceremony at the Presidential Palace in Hargeisa, Damon said:

The UK is committed to supporting the people of Somaliland. We recognise the efforts being made to improve institutions and to provide access to basic services for local people.

SDF 2 will ensure that ordinary people across Somaliland will benefit from improved services by supporting the growth of Somaliland's economy.

ESRES will address the high costs of electricity in Somaliland and help promote green growth and poverty reduction by increasing access to more affordable and reliable renewable energy services.

While in Hargeisa, Damon visited the Hargeisa Water Agency which SDF is supporting to supply clean water to the people of Hargeisa. He also visited the Somaliland Roads Development Authority (RDA) to discuss the UK's investment in roads and supporting the RDA's capacity to deliver on quality and safeguarding standards.

Note to Editors

- The Somaliland Development Fund (SDF) provides a single vehicle through which donors can support Somaliland's development goals, supporting projects that are fully aligned to the National Development Plan.

- The UK-funded Energy Security and Resource Efficiency in Somaliland (ESRES) programme has supported the installation of Six hybrid mini-grids providing clean energy and lowering energy prices in sites across Somaliland
-

Italy partners with the UK on Tempest

The Statement of Intent (SOI), signed at the DSEi conference yesterday, commits both governments to further develop their Combat Air capability relationship.

The agreement covers existing platforms such as Typhoon and F-35, as well as Tempest, the programme initiated by the UK to develop a next generation combat air system.

The Statement of Intent outlined a number of commitments from both countries:

- Closer Government alignment on future Eurofighter Typhoon enhancements;
- Deepening discussions on Tempest military requirements;
- Developing a combat air roadmap, identifying opportunities to integrate advanced technologies from Eurofighter Typhoon into Tempest;
- Developing an innovative, agile and co-operative industrial framework to deliver Tempest;
- Launching pilot studies to demonstrate new, collaborative ways of working;

The agreement was the result of the joint Government feasibility study, which was launched following publication of the UK's Combat Air Strategy at the Farnborough Airshow in July 2018.

The study concluded that the UK and Italy are natural Combat Air partners, with both Air Forces (the Royal Air Force and the Aeronautica Militare) operating the same, potent fleet of Eurofighter Typhoon and F-35.

Informed by these systems, both Air Forces have a strong overlap in views on the characteristics necessary for the next generation of combat aircraft. Both Air Forces also share a close alignment on doctrine, training, and operational experience.

The UK and Italy have a proven 50-year track record of working closely together on Combat Aircraft development and support through the Panavia Tornado and Eurofighter Typhoon programmes.

Both Governments confirmed a common desire for a strong industrial base to develop key capabilities and boost prosperity in both nations. The agreement also paves the way for closer industrial collaboration, including through shared industrial entities such as Leonardo and MBDA.

Last month, the UK and Swedish governments a comprehensive [Memorandum of Understanding](#) on future combat air, committing the parties to work on a joint combat air development and acquisition programme.

[UK firms showcase the future of mobility at Frankfurt Motor Show](#)

The Department for International Trade (DIT) will support some of the UK's most innovative automotive businesses to exhibit for the first time at the Frankfurt Motor Show, taking place from the 10 to 15 September.

In the 'New Mobility World' hall, UK companies will showcase new emission-free and sustainable technologies, ranging from Oxbotica's parking software and the electric Swifty Scooter, to the London EV Company Limited's iconic, electric black cabs.

With more than £2bn invested by the UK Government in the automotive industry, the UK offers the ideal place to develop and manufacture future generations of electrified, low-carbon, lightweight and connected vehicles.

Other UK companies attending the show include, AMPLYFI, AVID Technology, AppyParking, EXEROS Technologies, Global Design Solutions (GDS), Gordon Murray Design, McLaren Applied Technologies and Reflexal.

Graham Stuart, Minister for Investment at the Department for International Trade said:

We're proud of the UK's cutting edge automotive supply chain and its contribution to more sustainable transport, not only in Europe, but across the world.

We are already home to Nissan's volume battery factory for electric vehicles in Sunderland – the first in Europe, and Toyota's European centre for the production of Hybrid Powertrains, while the Jaguar I-Pace was the first electric car designed in Europe.

We believe collaboration and partnership are essential to meeting our common transport challenges and are delighted to bring UK and German expertise together.

We continue to work with partners around the world as the industry embarks on the transition to a zero-emission, connected and autonomous future.

DIT will be hosting a reception with up to 120 senior automotive executives from around the world.

The UK boasts an advanced market for automotive manufacture and is one of the leading locations for the testing of self-driving cars. It was also the first to create a legal framework for the use of autonomous cars on all UK roads and to issue regulations for the insurance of these vehicles. The UK is also home to the world's largest motorsport cluster – representing 6 of the 10 Formula One teams.

The UK and Germany are long-standing trade and investment partners with bilateral trade accounting for more than £130bn in 2018. The UK remains the number one investment destination in Europe and of the total £573bn invested in the UK by the EU, Germany accounts for £63bn. In turn, the UK has invested FDI stock of £23bn in Germany. Together UK and German companies employ over 1m people across both countries.